

# Pentecost...from Page 1A

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The Byron Herbert Reece Society welcomed guests to celebrate the 102nd occasion of the acclaimed farmer-poet's birth at the Reece Farm & Heritage Center on Saturday, Sept. 14.

Born on Sept. 14, 1917, Reece was a man both of his time and beyond his time.

In life, he worked his fingers to the bone to provide for his family as a farmer; used his knowledge as an educator to inspire people to rise above their stations in life; and described his heritage and home in poetry and prose penned with the timeless ink of his soul.

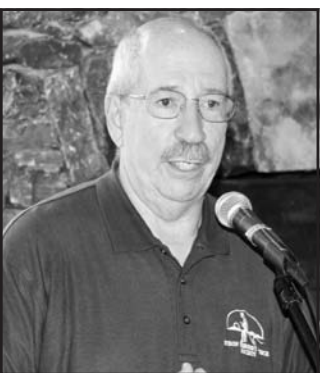
And though he died young – on June 3, 1958, at the age of 40 – his rich legacy of letters lives on, championed regionally by a devout group of supporters in the Byron Herbert Reece Society, and in the continued preservation of his farm and homestead by the society and Union County Government.

Located along Wolf Creek on 9.3 acres of what was once more than a hundred acres of Reece property, the Heritage Farm exists “to preserve, perpetuate and promote the literary legacy of the Appalachian farmer, poet and novelist, Byron Herbert Reece, one of Georgia's greatest writers.”

The restored farm is steeped in historical traditions chronicling a time when impoverished people ate what they grew and truly lived off the land. They'd work the fields from dawn 'til dusk, caring for a wide array of animals and making their own everyday household items.

It was a harsh yet hearty existence, and Reece drew much inspiration from the labor he performed on the family farm, which currently features a variety of exhibits showcasing the agrarian way of life experienced by Reece and his fellow mountain folk of yesteryear.

Today, Groundskeeper Dorsey Dockery cares for the farm's donkey, sheep, goats



**Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris delivered remarks at the Sept. 14 gathering of the Byron Herbert Reece Society.**

Photo by Shawn Jarrard

and chickens. He maintains a garden there as well and looks after a number of other exhibits that highlight the farm-to-table lifestyle that has largely become the domain of the past.

There are also the farm buildings – the corn crib, smokehouse, chicken house, spring house and barn – that add to the Heritage Farm's historically accurate depictions of Appalachian agriculture.

New to the farm is the Pentecost Family Antique Toolshed, which houses a museum containing hundreds of antique tools and other items that would have been used on farms in Reece's day.

Affixed to the front of the toolshed is a plaque celebrating the donation of the equipment by John R. and Sue Ellen Pentecost, who also gave \$5,000 toward the construction of the toolshed.

As Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris told it on Saturday, the generous donations to the Reece Farm came by way of a friendship forged years ago between Sue Ellen and his sister, Mary Carol Akins.

After all, the two women had attended Young Harris College together, and they both knew Byron Herbert Reece in life, which lent a certain air of providence to the donations.

“They've been friends of our family all these years,” Paris said. “Sue Ellen's husband, John R., he collected tools from all over the country and had this wonderful collection down at his farm in Winder.”

As soon as the Pentecosts learned that the county was taking on the ambitious Reece Farm restoration project in 2012, they jumped at the chance to donate part of their antique tool collection to the preservation effort.

At first, the donated tools resided in a room inside the farm's Barn Exhibit. Several months ago, however, the Pentecosts resolved to make another donation that would require a larger space.

“I've got another building of tools, and I would like to donate that to the society,” Paris recalled John saying. “And he said, ‘I'll donate \$5,000 toward building a building in which to put them.’ So, that is the toolshed down there.”

Both John and Sue Ellen were to be honored on Sept. 14 for their contributions to the farm in a special dedication of the recently built toolshed, but they had to cancel their trip up here after Sue Ellen suffered a health setback a few days before the event.

And in an emotional announcement on Saturday, Paris shared the sad news that Sue Ellen had passed away that morning.

“I think it was peaceful,” Paris said of her passing, asking those gathered to keep the Pentecosts in their thoughts and



**A view inside one of the rooms of the recently constructed Pentecost Family Antique Toolshed at the Reece Farm.**

Photo by Shawn Jarrard

prayers. “We're still hoping this family will be able to come up, and maybe it'll be in the spring when we can go ahead and do a dedication.”

“The North Georgia Technical College is working on coming up with signage and labeling for the tools and implements that are in that building. So, sometime early spring, when the farm opens again, we'll have that exhibit completely ready to go.”

Added Paris, “We're proud that (the Pentecosts) are a part of the Reece Farm and that, through our family and their love for this area, they became interested and got involved and got excited about this place.”

The birthday celebration that day was spearheaded by Byron Herbert Reece Society Board Chair Jerri Gill.

Following Paris' announcement that came after lunch, Gill rededicated the occasion as a memorial service for Sue Ellen Pentecost, and local musician Jeri Ann King led an impromptu performance of “Peace in the Valley” in Sue Ellen's memory.

For the most part, the commemorative birthday gathering was a joyous affair, featuring hours of musical entertainment, several readings of Reece poems, and a presentation of specially decorated birthday cakes honoring the legacy of Reece as an Appalachian farmer and poet.

Musical acts contributing to the event were local favorites John Cochran and the Cowhands, John Nix and the Country Cousins, and Sustained By Grace, a new ladies group.

Sam Ensley of the Union County Historical Society was scheduled to perform, and though he ended up not being able to attend the event, he did set up his equipment two days before the celebration for use by the other musicians at the Reece Farm Pavilion.

The proprietors of Nana & Papa's Homemade Ice Cream also made an

# Bomb Threat...from Page 1A



**The Union County Sheriff's Office blocking off the upper entrance to Walmart after the Friday the 13th bomb threat.**

Photo by Shawn Jarrard

of employees and customers, who either left the property or sheltered in the far end of the parking lot, local first responders joined Walmart management and staff in searching the store for suspicious packages, Loyd said.

Fortunately, searchers failed to turn up anything out of the ordinary, and management

re-opened the store shortly after 4 p.m., Loyd said.

There are currently no suspects in the incident, which remains under investigation, Loyd said.

“We're trying cypher out and check back with the number that showed up on caller ID,” Loyd said.

As to whether the bomb

threat was a distraction for some other crime potentially occurring in another part of town, Loyd said that, at this time, he and the Sheriff's Office “do not feel that that was any type of motive.”

“Until further investigation, we won't know that, but nothing happened during this period of time around town or anything that we know of,” Loyd said. “We still had staff available if anything was to arise. Our main objective in a situation like this is to make sure that everyone stays safe.”

This particular situation is markedly different from the last time Walmart had to be evacuated for a potential bomb, as the previous incident on Feb. 28 was a bomb scare and not a bomb threat.

Then, a “pipe-looking device” located within the store was safely identified as a confetti popper missing its product label.

## Woman's Enrichment Center

### 1st Annual Talent Search Fundraiser

The Woman's Enrichment Center is so excited to announce that our 1st Annual North Georgia Talent Search Fundraiser will be this Saturday night, September 21, 2019 at the First United Methodist Church Activity Center (The MAC) at 6:30 p.m.

Get your tickets now! 15 acts will be performing for sponsored cash prizes. We also have numerous door prizes for the audience, donated by local restaurants and other businesses.

Stop by the Center at 218 Jones St. Or call 706-745-7518 to get your tickets. Adult tickets are \$15 & Kids 10 and under are \$10. Tickets will also be available at the door. The auditorium seats 350, so don't wait to get your tickets - buy now!

The Woman's Enrichment Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping families, individuals, and pregnant women in our community. All of our services are free and confidential. NT(Sep18Z19)CA